



Ebola Information for Schools

Dear School Administrator/Childcare Provider:

The following information is being provided to school administrators, childcare providers, and school health providers that may have students or staff who have traveled internationally and are arriving from regions in West Africa with widespread transmission the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). The list of affected countries may change; currently affected countries can be found at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/distribution-map.html#areas>

It is advised that any persons arriving back in the US who have traveled from any of the affected countries, and who are free of symptoms, undergo a risk assessment for possible EVD exposures prior to arrival in the United States.

Notify DHEC of anyone with the following exposures:

- Was a household member or had contact with an Ebola patient.
- Provided health or supportive care in a region, facility, or household with any suspected or confirmed cases of EVD
- Had direct contact with blood or body fluids or items that came into contact with blood or body fluids from a person with Ebola.
- Touched bats or nonhuman primates (like apes or monkeys) or blood, fluids, or raw meat prepared from these animals in an area where Ebola transmission is occurring.
- Went into hospitals where Ebola patients were being treated and had close contact with the patients.
- Participated in funeral rites or touched the body of a person who died of Ebola or of unknown causes.

Use the attached screening tool to assist with the screening of all students and staff who have traveled to a country where widespread EVD transmission is occurring. If the traveler does not have any exposures as detailed in the screening tool, the traveler should be instructed to self-monitor twice a day for fever or other symptoms for 21 days following the date of departure from the affected country and immediately seek medical attention if they develop symptoms. A self-monitoring tool is attached for the documentation of self-monitoring.

Each school is recommended to have a plan in place in the event that a student or staff member who has traveled to one of the affected countries becomes ill with symptoms suggestive of EVD. The following are a series of questions to consider when developing a plan:

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What happens if someone travels to a place with an Ebola outbreak and then gets sick?

If the person is at home, advise them of the following:

- Get medical care **RIGHT AWAY** for fever, severe headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, or unexplained bleeding or bruising.
- Tell the hospital, medical clinic staff, or the 911 operator about the recent travel to West Africa or contact with a person who was sick with Ebola, and about symptoms **BEFORE** going to the doctor's office or emergency room. This will help the staff care for the ill person and protect other people.
- Limit your contact with all others and travel only to a doctor's office or hospital.

If the person is at school, the school nurse must:

- Refer to the attached Flow Chart to determine what actions to take. For a person with signs of Ebola illness and a recent history of travel or exposure:
 - Call 911 **RIGHT AWAY** for fever, severe headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, or unexplained bleeding or bruising.
 - Tell the 911 operator about the person's recent travel to West Africa or contact with a person who was sick with Ebola, and about symptoms so EMS workers are aware **BEFORE** transporting the person to the emergency room. This will help the staff care for the ill person and protect other people.
 - Separate the student or staff member in a private room. If the symptomatic person needs access to a restroom prior to the arrival of EMS, use a private bathroom if possible. Any bathroom facility used by the person must be restricted to further access until disinfected by individuals trained in effective disinfection and using appropriate PPE .
 - Use proper infection prevention and control measures and wear the right personal protective equipment (PPE), including masks, gloves, gowns, facemask and eye protection before having direct contact with an individual who is ill. After any contact, carefully remove PPE and make sure not to contaminate your skin, face or clothing. Follow your district's procedures to dispose of PPE as biohazard waste.
 - After removing PPE, wash your hands using soap and water (preferred) or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. Use soap and water when hands are visibly dirty.
 - Notify your regional DHEC office health department immediately regarding the person of concern.
 - Set aside any reusable medical equipment for proper disinfection by trained individuals and properly disposal of needles and other disposable equipment.

If the person is at school, and the school nurse is not present, an administrator or faculty/staff member must:

- Refer to the Flow Chart at the end of this document to determine what actions to take. For a person with signs of Ebola illness and a recent history of travel or exposure:

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- Call 911 **RIGHT AWAY** for measured or subjective fever, severe headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, or unexplained bleeding or bruising.
- Tell the 911 operator about the person's recent travel to West Africa or contact with a person who was sick with Ebola, and about symptoms so EMS workers are aware **BEFORE** transporting the person to the emergency room. This will help the staff care for the ill person and protect other people.
- Separate the student or staff member in a private room. If the symptomatic person needs access to a restroom prior to the arrival of EMS, use a private bathroom if possible. Any bathroom facility used by the person must be restricted to further access until disinfected by individuals trained in effective disinfection and using appropriate PPE.
- Be careful to not touch the ill person or anything that might be contaminated with his or her blood or body fluids.
- Wash your hands using soap and water (preferred) or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. Use soap and water when hands are visibly dirty.
- Notify your regional DHEC office health department immediately regarding the person of concern.

What supplies or plans do I need to have?

If a student or staff member with a potential Ebola exposure becomes ill while at school, the school should be prepared to isolate the ill person in a separate room. If the symptomatic person needs access to a restroom prior to the arrival of EMS, use a private bathroom if possible. Any bathroom facility used by the person must be restricted to further access until disinfected by individuals trained in effective disinfection and using appropriate PPE. It will also be important to protect staff against exposure to body fluids, especially if the person is bleeding, vomiting, having diarrhea or sweating profusely.

Schools will need PPE as described above for standard, contact, and droplet precautions. Some schools may wish to investigate purchasing thermometers that do not require direct contact with the person whose temperature is being measured.

Whom do I call with more questions?

Send your medical questions to DHEC

- Email: ebola@dhec.sc.gov
- Call 803-898-3708, or the Epidemiology Program in your region (see phone numbers on the List of Reportable Conditions: <http://www.scdhec.gov/Library/CR-009025.pdf>)

You can also find many documents addressing Ebola linked from this page:

<http://www.scdhec.gov/Health/FHPF/HealthAlertsNotifications/ebola/>

Where can parents and staff get more information?

General information about Ebola is available on the DHEC website at:

<http://www.scdhec.gov/Health/FHPF/HealthAlertsNotifications/ebola/>.

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Information in this document was gathered from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Dallas Independent School District, and the United Kingdom National Health Service. Please contact DHEC with your questions.

